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LD 1620

I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 1620. Increasing the recreational TYM (Total Yeast and Mold) testing threshold from 10,000 CFU/g to 100,000 CFU/g more accurately reflects realistic environmental conditions and agricultural practices. For context, outdoor air has been measured at around 50,000 CFU/g, making the current 10,000 CFU/g limit effectively a standard of near sterility—an unreasonable expectation for any agricultural product, particularly one grown outdoors.

Outdoor cultivation is not only viable, but also a more sustainable and environmentally responsible approach compared to energy-intensive indoor growing. The current threshold discourages this method, despite its ecological advantages.

Moreover, if we are measuring only total microbial counts without identifying specific species, a 100,000 CFU/g threshold provides a more accurate indicator of potential contamination. The presence of beneficial bacteria can actually enhance plant quality through processes like the rhizophagic cycle, where microbial activity in the trichomes stimulates increased production of terpenes and flavonoids. In this context, sterility is not the goal—safety is. What matters is the absence of harmful microbial species, not the total microbial count.

A threshold of 100,000 CFU/g better distinguishes between harmful contamination and the natural presence of beneficial microbes, making it a more scientifically sound and agriculturally feasible standard.